

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MADRID
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CNO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 121425

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OCLR, MNUC, SP, US

SUBJECT: NPW VISITS TO SPAIN

REF: A. MADRID 4420 (DTG 251324Z APR 78)
B. CNO WASH DC 061415Z MAY 78
C. JUSMG MAAG MADRID 231615Z JUN 77
D. CNO WASH DC 061414Z MAY 78

1. WE CONCUR WITH EMBASSY'S INTENTION, DISCUSSED IN REFTTEL
A, TO FOLLOW THE SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO ROTA BY USS NIMITZ,
USS CALIFORNIA AND USS SOUTH CAROLINA WITH A RENEWED REQUEST
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TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO OPEN A MEDITERRANEAN PORT TO
NPW. HOWEVER, VISIT BY USS NIMITZ TO ROTA 7-10 JULY IS AN
OPERATIONAL NECESSITY WHICH, AT THIS TIME, HAS PRIORITY
OVER THE COMMERCIAL PORT ENTRY OBJECTIVE. NAVY ADVISES
THAT THE VISIT IS REQUESTED FOR DEPLOYMENT TURNOVER BETWEEN
NIMITZ AND USS KENNEDY, AND WHILE ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS
HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED, THERE IS NO SUITABLE SUBSTITUTE.

WE THEREFORE REQUEST THE EMBASSY PROCEED WITH PROCESSING THE NIMITZ VISIT REQUEST SUBMITTED BY REFTEL B.

2. REGARDING PROJECT TO OPEN A COMMERCIAL PORT, WE REAFFIRM THAT THIS IS A HIGH PRIORITY OBJECTIVE. AT THIS STAGE OF

SCHEDULING THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP'S (NPTG) MOVEMENTS, HOWEVER, THE NAVY ADVISES IT CAN MAKE A CGN AVAILABLE TO VISIT CARTAGENA ONLY DURING THE PERIOD 12-16 JUNE. RECOGNIZING THAT CARTAGENA IS NOT A SOLUTION IN ITSELF TO THE NPW VISIT PROBLEM, BUT ACCEPTABLE ONLY AS A STEPPING STONE TOWARD ACCESS TO A PORT FOR THE CVN, WE QUESTION THE DESIRABILITY OF SUCH AN INITIATIVE AT THIS LATE DATE.

3. AN ADDITIONAL CONCERN WHICH BEARS ON THE QUESTION OF A COMMERCIAL PORT REQUEST AT THIS TIME IS THE STATUS OF THE PRE-VISIT ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SURVEYS. WASHINGTON AGENCIES ARE UNAWARE OF ANY FURTHER PORT SURVEY WORK UNDERTAKEN BY THE SPANISH NAVY SINCE COMPLETION OF SAMPLING AT PALMA. DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD ACCESS TO A COMMERCIAL PORT, OTHER THAN PALMA, TO BE SPANISH WILLINGNESS TO CONDUCT A PRE-VISIT ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SURVEY AS A POSITIVE SIGN THAT GOS IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING NPW ACCESS TO COMMERCIAL PORTS.

4. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONCERN IMPLIED IN REFTEL A THAT
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THE NIMITZ AND SHARK VISITS MIGHT HAVE BEEN PERCEIVED BY THE SPANISH TO CONFLICT WITH AN EARLIER SPANISH NAVY SUGGESTION FOR ONE MONTH VISIT SEPARATIONS. REVIEW OF REFTEL C, WHICH REPORTED THAT SPANISH SUGGESTION, INDICATES IT WAS OFFERED AS A NOMINAL GUIDELINE FOR VISIT FREQUENCY, NOT AS A RIGOROUS POLICY. NEVERTHELESS, THE NAVY HAS ATTEMPTED TO HONOR THE SUGGESTED FREQUENCY OF VISITS. WE CONSIDER THAT, IN LIGHT OF COOPERATIVE RECORD OF PROCESSING REQUESTS AND PREVIOUS WILLINGNESS TO ACCOMMODATE UNUSUAL VISIT CIRCUMSTANCES (DACE AND TULLIBEE, MAR-APR 77), THE SPANISH ARE LIKELY TO HAVE ACCEPTED BOTH NIMITZ AND SHARK VISITS. OF COURSE, SHARK'S MATERIAL PROBLEM REPORTED IN REFTEL D, HAS ELIMINATED THIS POTENTIAL ISSUE FOR THE PRESENT.

5. IN ANTICIPATION OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE EISENHOWER NPTG IN ABOUT JAN 79, WE WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY VIEWS ON RECOMMENDED GAME PLAN TO BE FOLLOWED IN PURSUIT OF CVN ACCESS TO SPANISH MED PORTS, AND PARTICULARLY, THE UTILITY OF AN INCREMENTAL APPROACH VIA CARTAGENA.

6. THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN COORDINATED WITH DEFENSE. VANCE

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